

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 12 and 14-20 have been cancelled in favor of newly presented claims 21-38, obviating the objections and rejections presented in the Final Office Action.

The Newly presented claims find full support in the specification and drawings and distinguish applicants' invention patentably over the prior art of record.

Newly presented independent claim 21 recites a piston ring having a base member with an outer annular surface extending between an upper side surface and a lower side surface and formed with a recess across only a portion of the annular surface and a land region across the remaining portion of the annular surface. Claim 21 further recites a first vapor deposition coating portion filling the recess and providing an outer coating contact surface, and the land region projecting radially outwardly of the coating contact surface. Claim 21 further recites a second vapor deposition coating portion disposed on the land region in radially outwardly spaced relation to the first coating portion, such that subsequent removal of the second coating portion and the subsequent removal of the portion of the land region projecting radially beyond the outer coating contact surface yields an essentially sharp-edged contact surface edge formed between the contact surface and at least one of the side surfaces.

The prior art of record does not teach or suggest such a piston ring as recited in claim 21, and as such it is respectfully submitted that claim 21 is allowable.

Newly submitted claim 34 recites a method of forming a vapor deposition coating on a radially outer surface of a piston ring, including forming a recess across a portion of the outer surface and a land portion adjacent the recess and projecting radially outward of the recess to an outer surface of the land portion. Claim 34 further recited applying a vapor deposition coating to the outer surface provided with a contact surface profile, including supplying a base member with a contact surface profile with a cover outside of the contact surface profile; applying the vapor deposition coating on the contact surface and subsequently removing the cover; such that

following the removal of the cover an essentially sharp-edged contact surface edge is formed between the contact surface and at least one of the side surfaces of the base member.

The prior art of record does not teach or suggest such a method as recited in claim 34, and as such it is respectfully submitted that claim 34 is allowable.

The amendment cancels an equal number of claims as are added, and could not have been earlier submitted since they are made in response to objections raised in the final rejection. Accordingly, since the claims at least present the application in better form for appeal and are believed to place the application in condition for allowance, it is respectfully submitted that the amendment is appropriate after-final.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge or refund any fee deficiency or excess to Deposit Account No. 04-1061 in the name of Dickinson Wright, PLLC.

Respectfully submitted,

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